

## CLAIMS

1. An apparatus for laminating three-dimensional surfaces, comprising:
  - a substrate, said substrate being formed of rigid material, having an upper surface, a lower surface and a first perimeter;
  - 5 means for forming three-dimensional features commencing at said upper surface, said three-dimensional features extending downwardly toward said lower surface;
  - a veneer, said veneer being formed of thin, resilient material and having a top surface and a bottom surface;
  - 10 glue, said glue being suitable for adhering said veneer to said substrate and being applied to the bottom surface of said veneer;
  - said veneer being positioned upon said substrate;
  - means for applying pressure to the top surface of said veneer to conform said veneer to said substrate; and
  - 15 whereby, when said glue has dried, the veneer will be adhered to the upper surface of the substrate and will reflect the three-dimensional features of the substrate.
  
2. An apparatus for laminating three-dimensional surfaces as described in Claim 1,
  - 20 wherein the three-dimensional features of the substrate are produced by manual carving of the upper surface of the substrate.

3. An apparatus for laminating three-dimensional surfaces as described in Claim 1, wherein the three-dimensional features of the substrate are produced by application of powered rotary cutting and grinding tools to the upper surface of the substrate.

5 4. An apparatus for laminating three-dimensional surfaces as described in Claim 1, wherein the three-dimensional features of the substrate are produced by computer-controlled contouring machinery.

10 5. An apparatus for laminating three-dimensional surfaces as described in Claim 1, wherein the substrate material is selected from the group comprising:  
wood, particleboard, chipboard, plastic, metal and cellular materials.

15 6. An apparatus for laminating three-dimensional surfaces as described in Claim 1, wherein the veneer material is selected from the group comprising:  
wood, burl wood, plastic and metal.

7. An apparatus for laminating three-dimensional surfaces as described in Claim 1, wherein the means for applying pressure to the top surface of the veneer to conform it to the substrate further comprises:  
20 an airtight, flexible container, said flexible container having a sealable opening, said opening being sized and shaped to admit said substrate with said veneer disposed thereon;  
means for evacuating the air from said container; and

whereby, when the substrate with the veneer disposed thereon is inserted into the container, the container sealed, and the air evacuated from the container, atmospheric pressure will conform the veneer to the upper surface of the substrate.

5

8. A method for laminating three-dimensional surfaces, comprising:

providing a substrate, said substrate being formed of rigid material, having an upper surface, a lower surface and a first perimeter;

forming three-dimensional features commencing at said upper surface, said three-dimensional features extending downwardly toward said lower surface;

providing a veneer, said veneer being formed of thin, resilient material and having a top surface and a bottom surface;

applying glue to the bottom surface of said veneer, said glue being suitable for adhering said veneer to said substrate;

positioning said veneer upon said substrate;

applying pressure to the top surface of said veneer to conform said veneer to said substrate; and

whereby, when said glue has dried, the veneer will be adhered to the upper surface of the substrate and will reflect the three-dimensional features of the substrate.

9. A method for laminating three-dimensional surfaces as described in Claim 8, further comprising:

providing an airtight, flexible container, said flexible container having a sealable opening, said opening being sized and shaped to admit said substrate with said veneer disposed thereon;

inserting the substrate with the veneer disposed upon it into said flexible container;

sealing said container;

evacuating the air from said container;

allowing the glue to dry; and

removing the laminated substrate from the container.